

## Victorian Regional Forest Agreements consultation input

The fundamental issue with the review of the RFAs is that there is the assumption that they can be modernised for a future of a native forest timber industry. This is clearly not the case.

We are confronted with a climate emergency. The level of carbon in the atmosphere must be reduced. The value of leaving the trees in the ground far outweighs any perceived monetary value from the timber.

The carbon storage and sequestration functions of our native forests, together with the essential role they play in stabilising catchment scale water cycles are vital. The modern RFAs need to be agreements that establish the transition to regional economies that are based on NO LOGGING of our native forests. Instead they will provide irreplaceable ecosystem functions including conservation of biodiversity and generate incomes from tourism and recreation.

There is absolutely no basis to consider that Vicforests has realised the objectives of ecologically sustainable forest management. On the contrary in fact as highlighted in the following article.

[theconversation.com/victorian-forestry-is-definitely-not-ecologically-sustainable-11392](https://theconversation.com/victorian-forestry-is-definitely-not-ecologically-sustainable-11392).

The RFAs cannot be sustained, they have not achieved their purpose

The exemption for the logging industry from the EPBC Act in effect ends when the RFAs expire. This must be the status quo. It is beyond belief that the legislation intended to protect our endangered species is deemed to not apply to the activity that has such an overwhelming effect. It is a mockery.

There must be a transition from native forest logging to plantation timber only. In 2019 and beyond it is outrageous to even consider that native forest could be logged to produce paper. If adequate volumes of recycled paper are not obtainable there is fibre from other plants such as hemp that can be used. This would be a modern RFA.

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